

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-07 SSM-03 IO-13 AF-08 TRSE-00  
/100 W

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R 151405Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0436

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 0677

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YE, SA

SUBJ: PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI ON SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS

1. DURING MY FEBRUARY 13 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI IN TAIZ, HE DESCRIBED THE CURRENT STATE OF SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS AS EXCELLENT, NOTING PARTICULARLY THAT PRINCE SULTAN HAS BECOME ESPECIALLY UNDERSTANDING OF YEMEN'S NEEDS AND PROBLEMS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, FOR EXAMPLE, IS MOVING QUITE WELL DESPITE THE FACT THAT AT THE WORKING LEVELS THERE ARE OCCASIONAL PROBLEMS WHICH HE SAID IN SOME CASES STEM FROM THE YEMENI SIDE AND IN OTHERS FROM THE SAUDI.

2. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ABOUT SAUDI INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE YEMENI AIR FORCE, AL-HAMDI SAID THAT SO FAR THE SAUDIS HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT WITH HIM ALTHOUGH HE UNDERSTANDS THE SAUDI ARE CONSIDERING FURNISHING THE YEMENI AIR FORCE WITH NEW HELICOPTERS.

3. AS HE HAS IN THE PAST, AL-HAMDI EXPRESSED THE HOPE  
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THAT IN ADDITION TO THE MANY VEHICLES WHICH THE SAUDIS HAVE PROMISED AND WHICH ARE NOW ARRIVING IN YEMEN, SOME OF THE OTHER HEAVIER EQUIPMENT (READ ARTILLERY) WOULD ALSO ARRIVE QUICKLY. IN THIS CONNECTION HE SAID THAT A MAJOR PROBLEM FACING THE YEMENI ARMY IS TRAINING AND HERE AGAIN HE HOPED THAT BOTH THE SAUDIS AND THE AMERICANS WILL PROVIDE MORE IN THIS AREA.

4. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT WE ARE PLEASED TO SEE YEMEN AND SAUDI ARABIA COORDINATING SO CLOSELY AND CONSIDER THIS COOPERATION A MAJOR SUCCESS FOR MODERATION AND STABILITY IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. AL-HAMDI REPLIED THAT HE AND THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT ARE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF US EFFORTS AS A FRIEND WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES. HE NOTED THAT IN MOST CASES YEMEN AND SAUDI ARABIA PREFER TO DEAL DIRECTLY ON MOST ISSUES BUT THAT IT IS REASSURING THAT THE US IS THERE READY TO HELP IF NEEDED. I ASSURED THE PRESIDENT THAT THE US GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION OF GETTING BETWEEN TWO BROTHERS BUT THAT AS A FRIEND OF BOTH WE ARE PREPARED TO HELP IF NECESSARY.

5. COMMENT: AL-HAMDI'S WORDS ONLY CONFIRM WHAT WE HAVE HEARD FROM FOREIGN MINISTER AL-ASNAJ AND OTHERS IN THE GOVERNMENT. SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS CONTINUE TO MOVE AHEAD IN THE WAY IN WHICH WE ENVISAGED WHEN WE RESUMED RELATIONS WITH YEMEN BACK IN 1972. WHILE WE SHOULD OBVIOUSLY CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION COLSELY, IT APPEARS THAT THE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES ARE NOW GOOD AND FOR THIS WE CAN TAKE A GREAT DEAL OF SATISFACTION.  
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